

Annual Report

November 2009-October 2010



The Child Health Field contributes to the work of The Cochrane Collaboration by ensuring that children are appropriately represented in Cochrane reviews, and by working to increase the use of Cochrane evidence in child health decisions. We carry out this role through building and maintaining networks for knowledge transfer and research collaboration.

The Child Health Field is directed by three Co-Coordinator: Terry Klassen (Winnipeg, Canada), Katrina Williams (Sydney, Australia) and Lisa Hartling (Edmonton, Canada). Field staff members, Denise Thomson (Administrator), Iva Seto (Research Coordinator), and Michelle Foisy (Research Assistant), are all based at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada.

Here is our news from the past year:

Team changes

We had some notable changes to our team this year. Field Coordinator Terry Klassen took up a new post at the Manitoba Institute of Child Health. Lisa Hartling, who has worked with the Field for many years, formally joined us as a Co-Coordinator. We also welcomed two new staff: Iva Seto took up the post of Research Coordinator in November, 2009, and Michelle Foisy joined us as our Research Assistant in April, 2010.

Funding

In conjunction with all the other Cochrane entities in Canada, the Child Health Field submitted an application in December 2009 to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) for renewal of our funding. We are delighted to report that this funding has been renewed until 2015. This funding application was a main priority of our Field staff, Coordinators and Advisory Board for several months. The planning for our upcoming five years was a very exciting and invigorating process, and, with the success of the application, we are very much looking forward to embarking on this ongoing work.

Cochrane Handbook

The Child Health Field has been invited to join with the Health Equity Methods Group, the Health Care of Older People Field and the Cochrane Consumers and Communication Review Group to develop a chapter for the revised Cochrane Handbook on "Addressing equity and sub-populations." This chapter will discuss issues around disadvantaged populations, children, older people and people with multi-morbidity. We anticipate that this chapter will be completed in 2011.

Evidence-Based Child Health: A Cochrane Review Journal

Evidence-Based Child Health: A Cochrane Review Journal (EBCH) is published by the Child Health Field in partnership with Wiley Blackwell. EBCH's mandate is to profile timely and topical Cochrane evidence to the child health community. EBCH was established in 2006 by co-Editors-in-Chief Terry Klassen and Martin Offringa. This year, Drs. Klassen and Offringa stepped down from this position and we were pleased to welcome Drs. Michael (Mike) Smith (Belfast, Northern Ireland) and Joan Robinson (Edmonton, Canada) to take over the direction for the journal.

We will move to producing six issues a year (an increase from four) as of January 2011. This reflects the value of our journal to its principal stakeholder, the European Paediatric Association (EPA), and our other readers.

We have introduced a new feature for the journal – the “Dr. Cochrane” continuing medical education columns, written by Dr. Lorenzo Moja of the Italian Cochrane Centre. Each one of these columns is based on an overview of reviews published in EBCH. The column features an entertaining story in which the semi-fictional character Dr. Archie Cochrane encounters a clinical scenario which must be addressed using evidence from the overview. In this way, the knowledge translation function of the overview is amplified, as guidance is provided to the reader to assist in incorporating the overview's evidence into his or her practice.

Overviews of reviews

The Child Health Field has moved to the forefront of a new form of research synthesis within Cochrane – the overview of reviews. We publish one overview in each issue of EBCH. These documents synthesize 2 or more Cochrane reviews on related interventions, with the goal of providing the busy reader with a short synopsis of the Cochrane evidence around a few key outcomes for a particular condition.

Overviews published during this period were on the topics of:

- Treatment of childhood and adolescent anxiety disorders
- Treatment of community-acquired pneumonia in children
- Treatment of major depression in children and youth
- Treatment of chronic cough in children.

Opportunities Fund funding for evidence-based answers in respiratory child health

Field Co-ordinators Dr. Terry Klassen and Katrina Williams initiated a successful application to the Cochrane Opportunities Fund to do work in knowledge translation in the area of respiratory child health. The project will develop evidence-based answers to PICO-form questions submitted by clinicians about treatment, diagnosis and prognosis. The Cochrane Editorial Unit and the Cochrane Airways and Acute Respiratory Infections Groups, along with external partners Wiley Blackwell and the European Paediatric Association, are partners in this project.

StaR Child Health: International Forum for Standards on Research with Children

StaR Child Health is a group of methodologists, clinicians and policy makers who seek to enhance the quality, ethics and reliability of paediatric clinical research by promoting the use of evidence-based standards or guidance for clinical studies with children. Dr. Terry Klassen, Field Coordinator, and Field Advisory Board member Dr. Martin Offringa are among the founders of this group.

The StaR Child Health Initiative hosted its second annual Summit, "Going for Gold," in Vancouver, Canada (home of the 2010 Olympics, hence the title). The Summit brought together an international group of speakers and participants to discuss the progress that has been made in developing guidance, and the work that still remains to be done. The Risk of Bias Group, which involves Drs. Klassen and Hartling, presented two workshops at the summit.

The Child Health Field is particularly involved in the group led by Katrina Williams that is developing guidance on how to establish appropriate subgroups in pediatric trials, and we hope to have a draft ready in mid-2011.

Conferences

At the 2010 annual meeting of the Pediatric Academic Societies, Field Advisory Board members Drs. Virginia Moyer, Martin Offringa and Tonse Raju were three of the presenters for the workshop, "Use it or Lose it – Understanding, Conducting and Applying Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses." This was a very successful workshop that attracted approximately 65 participants; at one point, the room was so full that the conference organizers were concerned about violating the local fire code! The Field has co-sponsored an abstract for a similar workshop for the 2011 meeting; this was submitted in August 2010.

Dr. Michael Smith represented the EBCH Editorial Board on the planning committee for the EPA's Excellence in Paediatrics conference in Florence, Italy, in December 2009. Dr. Smith also chaired the session on "Obesity" at the Evidence-Based Nutrition and Child Health one-day session, the day before the main conference, which was co-sponsored by the Child Health Field and the EPA.

The Child Health Field formally co-sponsored the workshop, Putting Evidence into Practice conference, Edmonton, Canada, February 18-20, 2010. This is a trans-disciplinary workshop in evidence-based practice and critical appraisal. Participants are grouped according to discipline. There were also two small group sessions lasting the duration of the conference on the basics of systematic reviews. Dr. Terry Klassen was one of the leaders for the Pediatrics group and Dr. Lisa Hartling was one of the leaders for the Systematic Reviews group.

Child-relevant reviews links project

This project aims to increase the uptake of Cochrane review evidence by sending out links to child-relevant reviews newly published or updated in each issue of the Cochrane Library (CLIB). The project is now in its fourth year. A new list is sent to coincide with the release of each new issue of CLIB. If you would like to be included in the mailing list, please contact the Child Health Field.

Evidence for Clinicians

The Child Health Field coordinates a column, "Evidence for Clinicians," which is published in the Canadian journal *Paediatrics & Child Health*. The columns review the evidence related to a specific clinical question, and provide a summary of its relevance for clinical decisions. In so doing we not only address a particular clinical issue, but also educate clinicians about the nature of evidence-based practice. You can link to the published columns from our website.

For more information about the Cochrane Child Health Field, please contact:

**Denise Thomson, Field Administrator, denise.thomson@ualberta.ca
www.cochranechildhealth.org**